

1608/5626.

The TENDENCY of the CONSTITUTION
of the CHURCH of SCOTLAND, to
form the TEMPER, SPIRIT, and CHARAC-
TER of her MINISTERS,

Pointed out in a

S E R M O N,

Preached in the HIGH-CHURCH of EDIN-
BURGH, May 5. 1767.

At the Opening of the SYNOD of LOTHIAN
and TWEEDDALE.

By ALEX. CARLYLE, D. D.
MINISTER of INVERESK, and ALMONER to his MAJESTY.

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1608/5626.

THE TOWN OF LONDON
OF THE CHURCH OF ST. MARTIN
IN THE PARISH OF ST. MARTIN
IN THE DISTRICT OF ST. MARTIN

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD 1608

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The TENDENCY of the CONSTITUTION
of the CHURCH of SCOTLAND to form
the Temper, Spirit, and Character of
her MINISTERS.

PSAL. xlviii. 12, 13.

*Walk about Zion, and go round about her: tell
the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bul-
warks, consider her palaces: that ye may tell
it to the generation following.*

IT is an important question, what effect
moral causes have in forming the cha-
racters of men, since on that depend the
utility and excellence of laws and institu-
tions. For if natural causes solely, or chiefly,
operate on the human mind; if men are
formed like plants, by the heat of the sun,
and the fertility of the soil; the labours of
the sage and the legislator are in vain: But
if, on the other hand, they can be moulded

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by discipline and laws, and may attain to dignity and virtue by the force of wise institutions, the best service that can possibly be done them, is to bring them under the power of good government, or to preserve it among them when already established.

IT is with a view to this question, that I propose, in this discourse, to consider the constitution of the CHURCH of SCOTLAND; not as it is founded in the word of God, or as it is agreeable to the plan of the primitive times; more important propositions still, which have often received as much illustration, and been confirmed with as much proof, as the nature of the thing would admit; but only in certain points, as it is connected with society, and as its external laws and regulations, that are of human invention, have a tendency to form the temper, character, and spirit of its members. The goodness of its institutions, in this respect, I shall beg leave to consider as the *towers, bulwarks, and palaces of our ZION*, which help at once to protect and adorn her; which will recommend her to the love and reverence of
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all her sons; and prove, by one argument more, that, even in her outward fabric, she is not unworthy of that *wisdom which cometh from above.*

MY Reverend FATHERS and BRETHREN, I hope, will forgive me, for attempting a subject, which I humbly apprehend becomes me better, than if I held up a model for their behaviour as ministers of CHRIST; which has often been done by masterly hands, on such occasions. I am sure they will hear me with candour on points with respect to which I may be so liable to mistake; and on which I shall, nevertheless, speak with freedom, prompted by the love of my own order, and veneration for this CHURCH.

IN discoursing of this subject to an audience of another kind, I should *first* delineate the constitution of this CHURCH, as consisting of different orders, formed into subordinate judicatories, with all the powers of government so equally and properly divided, as to make a republic of no imperfect kind. But this is so well understood by my reverend

hearers, that it would be impertinent in me to consume their time upon it.

It shall therefore be the chief object of this discourse, to shew the tendency of the constitution of the CHURCH of SCOTLAND to form the temper, spirit, and character of her members. And this, by the blessing of God, I shall endeavour to point out in three material instances, that respect them as ministers, as BRITONS, and as men. For I will shew, in the

1st place, The tendency of our ecclesiastical constitution, to preserve good morals, and purity of doctrine.

2^{dly}, Its tendency to inspire us with the love of liberty, and the free government of our country.

3^{dly}, Its tendency to form the personal character of its members.

I am, 1st, To shew the tendency of our ecclesiastical constitution to preserve good morals, and purity of doctrine.

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THE apostle PAUL, speaking of the ministers of the gospel, requires it as their first quality, that they be blameless, or irreproachable, 1 TIM. iii. 2; for this reason no doubt, lest the people, to defend themselves from their rebukes or censures, should say, *Physician, heal thyself!* a reproach, that, whenever it falls with justice, takes from them all liberty of speech, and obliges them to tolerate vice, and to fear the vicious. For though their character and mission is independent of the merit of their lives, yet the bulk of mankind are neither refined nor equitable enough to make this distinction; but when they despise a man's private actions, they will despise his public ministrations too.

IN other churches, the pomp and splendor of worship, the power and dignity of the superior clergy, and their temporal wealth and dominion, will preserve influence and respect to their order, even after corruption of manners has crept in among them. But the members of this CHURCH, without dignities, without power, without wealth and dominion;

nion, hold their ascendant over the minds of men, only by their virtue and abilities.

AND happy is it for us, that, being men of like frailty with others, we are laid under the restraint of discipline: a discipline by the laws of the realm still vested in this CHURCH, by which she can not only exclude from her highest privileges such of her lay-members as lead vicious and disorderly lives, but entirely expel such corrupt ecclesiastics as bring disgrace upon their order: a discipline that, though strict in its own nature, yet is mild and gentle in its execution; for the censorial power is committed to the most subordinate court that has jurisdiction over the clergy; its inspection is near, its vigilance perpetual; and, by giving check to the first appearance of faults, it prevents their growing into crimes.

By the nature of our constitution; there is little danger that the CHURCH should become remiss in the exercise of her discipline: for she depends on that, in a great measure, for the esteem she has in the world, and for
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her influence over the people, to whom the last appeal is made in the trials of a candidate for the ministry, for they are at liberty to object to his morals or his doctrine ; so that the virtue and credit of her members are deeply interested in the execution of it. Her discipline is still further secured by this means, that as there is a perfect equality among all those in whom the censorial power is vested, the connection of protection and dependence, which has a tendency to screen faults, and to flatter vices, cannot take place; but, on the contrary, the jealousy and rivalry of a republican spirit, will never fail to favour the strict execution of the laws.

WHAT I have said with respect to the morals of the clergy, extends also to the duties of the pastoral office, the diligent execution whereof is committed to the same watchful care. It likewise applies to doctrine, the purity of which it is necessary to secure. For as the minds of men are not formed to think exactly in the same manner on all points, and as the love of singularity, or distinction, might carry them far, were they
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at liberty to give vent to their peculiar opinions, it is a wise restraint, that confines our public teachings within certain limits prescribed by the CHURCH. Hard as this may seem to bear on liberty of conscience, there cannot be a national church without it ; for if full freedom was allowed to the extravagant fancies of men, they would soon divide, and branch out into a thousand different sects. It is necessary too, that the magistrate, who is to protect the public religion, should know what it is, and have it clearly defined.

BUT it may, perhaps, be objected to what I have said on this point, that the fact is against me ; and that our discipline, which I have represented to be of so much utility, and of so much force, has, in reality, lost its effect. This I cannot think clear, by any means : for it is much more probable, that the complaints on this head should take their rise from that peevish humour, which, in every age, leads men to depreciate the worth and virtue of the present times, when compared to the former ; or to a spirit
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of faction, to an alteration of manners, or to some other less obvious source ; than that our constitution of government, without any visible cause, should have lost its vigour, or the principles I have mentioned no longer operate on the human mind.

BUT, my Reverend FATHERS and BRETHREN, let us look round us into the world, and we shall do ourselves the justice that the rest of mankind are willing to do us ; for, in this respect, there are no ecclesiastics that stand higher in the general esteem, than the clergy of the CHURCH of SCOTLAND. And, in fact, after all the complaints that have been made of degeneracy, and corruption of morals, of what crimes have they been guilty ? Of what kind, and of what number have they been convicted ? What order of men can boast of so many members whose characters are unsullied even with the imputation of crimes ? They are not angels, but men : They cannot boast of perfect innocence and virtue ; they do not pretend to an exemption from the infirmities of human nature : And if now and then, a man *of like passions with others*, has yielded to the force of temptation,

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tion, and suffered the just punishment prescribed by the laws of the CHURCH, is not this a stronger proof of the goodness of our discipline, than of the licentiousness of our morals?

IF some guilty persons have escaped, is that to be imputed to the corruption of our courts, rather than to the imperfection of all human tribunals? Are not the essential forms of trial to be observed, without which the innocent could not be safe? For what crime has any person been tried and acquitted of late, before our judicatories, of so deep a die, as it would be for a member of our supreme court, in his capacity of a judge or jurymen, to decide in a particular case, upon impressions of character received out of doors, or on his own general ideas of expediency and public good?

NOR can I readily admit that our discipline has of late grown more remiss, or that the morals of the clergy are now less pure, than in earlier periods of this CHURCH. For without laying any stress on the general observation, That great crimes are least frequent in periods of refinement, when
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mens minds are softened by the progress of knowledge and the arts, and brought under habitual restraint by the stability of legal government; I apprehend, that the complaints on this head may be, in a great measure, accounted for, by attending to a plain distinction between MANNERS and MORALS.

IGNORANCE and superstition, from age to age, have fixed on things quite indifferent in their own nature, and, by stamping on them the characters of vice and virtue, have rendered it extremely easy for the artful and designing to impose upon mankind, and raise a character of sanctity, at the small expence of being rigid and exact in trifles, that have no connection with religion or morality; like the Pharisees of old, who paid *tithes of mint, anise, and cummin, but neglected the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith*. But the increase of knowledge, and the progress of society, have restored many of these artificial virtues and vices to their own class again: and while religion and virtue have, in reality, gained by this alteration of manners, the ignorant and superstitious, (for there are some

in all ages), continue still to think them of the same importance as before, and judge of characters by the false standard of former times.

WHAT then is called MANNERS, in general, or even the DECORUM of a particular character, are not properly the objects of laws and discipline. No rules can be prescribed for modes that are changing every day, no standard can be fixed for what is shifting continually; but every person must be left to the corrections of ridicule and contempt from the world, which are always applied to singularity, affectation, and indecency. Yet, even in this respect, the ministers of this CHURCH are aided by her institutions: for this species of faults, though not subjects of law, are liable to the private admonitions, and fraternal rebukes, of the censorial power.

So far then as laws and regulations, and the restraints of discipline, conduce to make men virtuous, or to keep them so, the constitution of the CHURCH of SCOTLAND has been wisely framed. I proceed, in the

2d place, To shew its tendency to inspire us with the love of liberty, and the free government of our country.

BESIDES the sentiments natural to a BRITON born since liberty was established by law; besides the liberal education of clergymen, and their early acquaintance with those books of antiquity that inspire mankind with elevated thoughts, and the love of freedom which reigned in the state of society they describe; there are circumstances peculiar to this CHURCH, which must endear the free constitution of their country, more to her members than to other men.

WHEN the reformation was first attempted in SCOTLAND, under that form which is now established, and which had the inclinations of the people in every age; it was not only for the rights of conscience that our forefathers struggled and fought, but for the rights of men: they made war not only on priests, but on tyrants; and when they conquered, they established civil liberty, as the only guardian of true religion. The
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hard contentions of the times had, of themselves, a tendency to rouse and enlarge the mind ; and being engaged against the same enemies, and involved in one common cause with the patriots, in every period of our history, the PRESBYTERIANS appeared strenuous assertors of the liberties of mankind, and of their country. On the other hand, during all the efforts of illegal power, our CHURCH, as one of the most determined and formidable foes of tyranny and tyrants, was sure to feel the first effects of their wrath ; at least, examples of lenity were so rare, that she was not deceived into the false confidence, that such flattering suspensions of hostility were designed to produce.

AND not only are the members of this CHURCH excited to the love of liberty, by their attachment to their friends, and their aversion to their enemies ; but our very mode of government, and its genius and spirit, must form the mind to liberty, independent of the connection of interests, or our attachment to the ILLUSTRIOUS FAMILY on the throne, and our gratitude for the many blessings

sings we have derived from them: For equality, which is the foundation of freedom, is the foundation of our ecclesiastical constitution too; and the spirit of democracy is so entirely preserved in all its institutions, laws, and forms, that none of her members can possibly be subjects of any other than a free state.

BUT this is a quality that our CHURCH has always been owned to possess; and to such a degree, that her enemies have endeavoured to represent it as one of the worst of her faults. For it was long objected to the PRESBYTERIANS, that they were of such a turbulent and seditious spirit, so violent and factious, as to be incapable of rule, and particularly incompatible with monarchical government, such as that of BRITAIN has ever been. But, on strict inquiry, this very complaint will be found to conduce to their praise: For in what times were they turbulent and seditious? Only in the times of tyranny; when to submit, was to degrade human nature; when to be peaceable, was to be a slave. But, under the government
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of laws, with a race of KINGS on the throne who have asserted and enlarged, not encroached on the rights of mankind, no church in the world has been more obedient or more loyal. Witness her conduct in every period of danger to the state; witness her unshaken attachment, her active zeal, in the rebellions that have of late torn the bowels of our country.

BEFORE the principles of toleration, that do so much honour to the last age, were established, the CHURCH of SCOTLAND was, no doubt, often seized with a spirit of violence against other denominations of Christians, that, had she been singular in that respect, would have justly rendered her an object of aversion. But this was far from being the case: she was not, in this point, more ignorant, or more severe, than her neighbour-churches; and having often felt the heaviest hand of persecution, it was no wonder that she was sometimes violent and unrelenting in her turn. But for half a century past, since the minds of men have become calm and steady under a legal government,

ment, and since the ardent zeal of enthusiasm has given place to, or been tempered, by the benign principle of CHRISTIAN CHARITY, the CHURCH of SCOTLAND has demonstrated the truth of that position of a great author, "That uniformity is an idea of weak and vulgar minds:" For in submission to the laws, in loyalty to the CROWN, and in liberal and generous sentiments to those who differ from her, she is outdone by no church in the world.

IN this view, the CHURCH of SCOTLAND may be considered as of great utility to the public; for without power or temporality to make her dangerous, she breeds a set of men with principles of freedom, who acting in a body, and having an ascendant over the minds of the people, must, while unseduced and uncorrupted, be one of the bulwarks of the state. Before the happy æra of the union, the commons of SCOTLAND, led by attachment to their chiefs, or prompted by religious zeal, appeared often indeed in the field, on the side of liberty; but it was a liberty they neither enjoyed nor understood. And on

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account of certain untoward circumstances that relate to the basis of government in this country, the distinct sense and knowledge of civil and political liberty, has not diffused itself so far among them as might have been expected. But the clergy of this CHURCH, fully sensible of the blessings we enjoy, and well-instructed in the nature of government, in some degree compensate for this defect; for they fill up the middle rank between the commons and their superiors, and, in their intercourse with the people, fail not to impress them with just ideas of the rights of men and of BRITONS, and to inspire them with that love of the public which binds them to their country. While they retain their character for piety and good morals, they will not abuse this influence over the people: when they depart from it, and become vicious and corrupt, they will no longer be believed.

BUT I proceed, in the

3^d place, To point out the tendency of our ecclesiastical constitution, to form the personal characters of its members.

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IT is thought, that all men receive a certain cast, or turn of character, from their profession and manner of life; and, so far as this influence extends, it is of importance what direction it takes. It must be owned, that there are some general prepossessions against the clerical profession, as unfavourable to certain amiable and manly qualities, and as giving so deep a tincture to the very virtues that belong to it, that the piety of churchmen is believed to border on hypocrisy, their morals on austerity, their learning on pedantry, and their zeal for religion and the good of mankind to be, for the most part, assumed as a pretence to aid or to cover their pride and ambition. But I am of opinion, that the tendency of the constitution of our CHURCH, not only obviates these general objections, but also that it has force enough to form a very respectable character; and, in particular, that admitting some few peculiar disadvantages to which her ministers are liable, there are not, on the whole, many orders of men, and no clergymen of any denomination, whose functions and manner of life are better suited than theirs

to produce a spirit of independency, or to exercise and strengthen some of the best faculties and affections of the mind.

IF it be true, that it belongs to the *righteous*, and the free, to be *bold as a lion*, the minister of this CHURCH must derive fortitude and elevation of mind from the causes already mentioned. His very manner of obtaining a living, never by purchase, seldom by personal application; the consciousness of being well-qualified for the office, after having had his abilities and morals severely tried; together with that equality of rank with the fathers of the CHURCH, to which he is at once admitted; tend, in the beginning, to inspire him with manly and generous sentiments: and the natural effect of the pastoral employment, in which he is afterwards engaged, is to raise, and not depress the spirit. He has made choice of a profession which, though not opulent, is liberal; he has entered into a state which, though not improveable, is independent. Without the habits that contract the heart, without the views that enslave the mind,

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the member of this CHURCH therefore rests his hopes, in this world, on personal distinctions alone; on his talents, his learning, or his virtue.

IN other churches, the great power and wealth of dignified clergymen, no doubt, throw a splendor on the whole body, and may often be strong incentives to a noble and manly ambition: but as they leave the bulk of the order at so great a distance, and make preferment a constant object of attention, it may be questioned, how far they are favourable to some of the best qualities of the mind. In our CHURCH, equality of rank, whatever inconveniencies may otherwise attend it, effectually prevents the growth of some kind of vices; for every one of her sons standing on the same ground with another, looks neither down with fastidiousness, nor up with adulation.

THE part, besides, that every clergyman of this CHURCH engages in, whenever he is ordained, not only to teach but to rule, must strengthen and invigorate the mind.

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For though the objects may appear but small in comparison with the great affairs of civil government; yet the same talents are exerted, the same affections and passions are exercised, the same powers and energies of mind are employed in church-courts as in others. And in the freedom of debate, in the bustle of popular assemblies, in all applications to men, force and spirit are improved more than in any other exercise; and the faculties of the soul are not only whetted, but enlarged. It is more than probable, that our situation will ever prevent us from excelling in elegance of behaviour, in polished manners, or in graceful accomplishments; nor is it of much importance that we should. But if we do not attain those better qualities, that enable a man to act a vigorous and independent part, whenever his own opinions and affections, or the public good, shall engage him, we are without excuse; for no churchmen were ever placed in a situation of more advantage for acquiring them. We stand at present, as I apprehend, distinguished, as a body of men, for some of the qualities I have mentioned. Piety, good morals, and fidelity in his office, are indispensable in

a minister; but without a free and independent mind, he will want one of the best and most effectual guards to his virtues.

AN eminent author has ascribed certain peculiar vices to the clergy, which, he says, are derived from their profession and manner of life, in so much as to justify, in a great degree, the trite maxim, that "priests of all religions are the same," and tend naturally to destroy the candour and ingenuity of their tempers, to render their probity for the most part suspicious, and to make them dangerous to civil government. Now as these reflections coincide but too much with the prepossessions of many, and as religion itself may suffer by such imputations upon her ministers, it will not be improper to shew, that this charge does not apply to the members of this CHURCH, and that our constitution itself obviates these general objections.

THE characteristical vices of clergymen, that he chiefly dwells upon, are hypocrisy, ambition, and pride. "To hypocrisy," he alleges,

ledges, " they are inclined ; because, being
 " drawn from the common mass of man-
 " kind, they will either have no great turn
 " for devotion ; or, were they ever so good,
 " to support the character of their profes-
 " sion, and to impose upon mankind, they
 " must appear to be still better than they
 " are." But our CHURCH is so happily con-
 stituted, that this objection does not apply
 to her members.

FOR admitting that the restraints of disci-
 pline might give check to the natural cha-
 racter, were they to operate alone ; yet, when
 they are counteracted by the principles of
 freedom and the spirit of independency,
 which I have shewn to belong in a remarka-
 ble manner to the ministers of this CHURCH,
 they cannot possibly overpower the candour
 and ingenuity of the mind. Our republi-
 can form of government, which exposes every
 man's character and conduct to be near-
 ly inspected by his equals ; our contentions
 in church-courts, where our talents and pas-
 sions are sufficiently employed ; prevent both
 the inclination and the power of imposing a
 feigned

feigned character on the public. Our early and constant intercourse with the world, our daily communications with our people, the simplicity of our worship, and, perhaps, even the slight distinction of dress between us and other men, are all circumstances that disqualify us for acting the part of impostors.

NOR is this all : For if artifice and disguise were attempted, they would now meet with but a cold reception. Superstition and monachism having been long banished from PROTESTANT churches, the character of a clergyman that is most beloved and respected amongst us, is that which is most amiable and respectable. The arts of popularity may, no doubt, sometimes be tried, and particular prejudices and weaknesses of the people may be applied to : but these arts cannot long be successful. The other parts of a man's conduct that are inconsistent with his arts and his pretences, being exposed to the near inspection of familiarity, and the vigilance of rivalry, will soon betray or detect his real character. Popular virtues only, can al-

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ways retain the love and esteem of the people. An unfeigned piety, a tender humanity, diligence in the pastoral office, integrity and candour, liberality of mind, steadiness of conduct, uniformity of zeal; these are the qualities that render a man a popular and respectable minister of this CHURCH. And these, I hope, we do not in general need to feign, to please our people, or impose upon mankind.

WITH as little force can the charge of ambition, in the sense he means, be brought against the ministers of this CHURCH.

HE alledges, " That, while the ambition of
 " other men is commonly satisfied by excel-
 " ling in their particular profession, and
 " thereby promoting the interests of socie-
 " ty, the ambition of the clergy can only
 " be satisfied by promoting ignorance and
 " superstition, and implicit faith, and pious
 " frauds : and having got, what Archime-
 " des only wanted, (*viz.* another world on
 " which to fix his engines), no wonder they
 " move this world at their pleasure ; which
 " being

“ being added to the close union of interests
 “ that takes place among clergymen of the
 “ same religion, makes them extremely for-
 “ midable to society.”

How much soever such objections may apply to the priests of the church of ROME, whose hearts are hardened, by celibacy, to the interests of society, there is no PROTESTANT church against whom they can justly be laid. And with respect to the CHURCH of SCOTLAND, nothing can be more foreign to her constitution, or to the spirit and practice of her members. For, to cure the jealousy of the state, she has admitted to a parity of rule with her ministers, the order of lay-elders, who are incorporated in all her judicatories in such numbers, as to be effectual guardians of the interests of society, against every possible combination of the clergy. And as I have already observed, that we could not impose on the people, were we ever so much inclined to it ; I must add, that every clergyman, being a member of the great community of BRITAIN, which involves in it the interests of religion and liberty, as well as of our particular CHURCH,

the private corporation-spirit is thereby counteracted and controlled, so that it can never be dangerous to society. And to this great public we are bound, not by our principles alone, but by one of the strongest affections of the human mind, the love of our families and children.

IF the charge of pride and obstinacy, when laid against the members of this CHURCH, is not already fully answered by what has been said concerning the two preceding objections, let it be farther observed, that mens minds are wonderfully softened since toleration was established; for sectaries having no longer the power of hurting each other, their animosities are in a great measure at an end. And let me add, that our CHURCH in particular, guards against these vices, by the equal power of its members, as rulers in a free and independent community, where pretence and authority have no effect, and nothing but reason and superior powers of persuasion can prevail.

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THUS have I endeavoured to shew the tendency of our ecclesiastical constitution to form the temper, spirit, and character of its members : or, in other words, I have *marked the towers, bulwarks, and palaces of our Zion* ; which though not sumptuous and costly edifices, yet are founded deep, and are well-calculated for strength and duration. But they are not perfect : so far as they are human, like all things else, they are liable to defects ; a few of which I beg leave to point out, before I conclude, that we may skilfully bend our endeavours to support our JERUSALEM where she is weak, and to repair her where she has fallen into decay.

THE *first* defect I shall mention, is in the very fabric of our constitution itself ; which intrusts the same body with the highest judicative and executive powers, and even with great part of the legislative too : A combination that, in some cases, would be extremely dangerous ; and, even in our case, is attended with this inconvenience, that our courts, in their judicative capacity, may sometimes decide on general expediency, rather

ther than particular laws ; and with the temper of judges, less than the spirit of legislators. Hence it is, that partiality and injustice may be exercised, the innocent may be condemned, and the guilty may be acquitted. One compensation or balance, however, there is to this defect in our constitution, which is this, that the supreme power is not lodged in a permanent body, but in a court of representatives chosen every year ; and who being themselves the peers of all those who are tried before them, are not likely to be either able, or willing, to persist in any plan of oppression or injustice.

A *second* defect is a certain consequence of our republican constitution, which makes us liable to faction and party-spirit.

AN evil no doubt fraught with many breaches of charity, and with much alienation of mens mind from each other. For men who set out with the firm belief that they are promoting public good, and serving the great ends of virtue and religion, and who are countenanced and confirmed by
their

their associates in this opinion, are apt, when acting in a party, to go lengths, of which, in other situations, they would be utterly ashamed. Hence the liberty that is taken of making truth and conscience to be only of one side ; of branding each other with the names of LIBERTINE, and HYPOCRITE ; of magnifying an indecorum into a crime, or of construing a severe or morose demeanour to be vile grimace ; while the enemies of our CHURCH lie in wait for such fair opportunities of seducing the credulous from every side, and the foes of all religion sit *in the scorner's chair and laugh.*

THIS evil, which calls for the attention of all men of worth and virtue to mitigate and assuage its more violent symptoms, is however the genuine product of our constitution ; and as long as we are free and independent, and, at the same time, imperfect creatures, can never be wholly cured. But it is happily controlled in its most pernicious effects, by the broad basis of our supreme court, which brings members from every corner, uninfected with each others
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local passions ; and by the institution of elders : an order not only most wisely calculated to promote religion and good morals among the people, and reconcile them to the discipline of the CHURCH ; but also to unite us more closely with the commonwealth, to prevent the jealousy of government, to guard against the encroachments of ecclesiastical power, and to abate the ferment of minds sometimes overheated with party-zeal and strife.

THE *third* and *last* defect that I shall mention, is the incompetent provision for the clergy : a defect that I do not unjustly ascribe to the constitution ; which was formed on a surrender of the patrimony of the church, and all temporal power and dominion, with entire reliance for its support on the sense which the public should have of its utility. This is an evil not only severely felt by the ministers of this establishment (who, I am bold to say, would not dishonour any society upon earth), but of the most threatening aspect on the CHURCH ; since it may soon fill her with persons of inferior birth and mean education, to the ruin of learning,

learning and religion too : an evil, however, that we cannot justly impute, in all its extent, to the illiberal spirit of the generations that are past, since they could not possibly foresee the rapid progress of commerce ; otherwise, it is probable, they would have fixed on such a kind of provision for the clergy, as would have risen, in some proportion, to the prosperity of the country, and not fallen in its value every day.

WHAT we may hope for from this splendid age, so fertile in grand and magnificent projects, is beyond my conjecture. But if the CHURCH of SCOTLAND is such as I have represented her to be, of so much utility, and of so little danger to the public, her falling state, in this respect, will one day become an object to Legislature itself : and men, capable of great and extensive views, will see that, by preserving our CHURCH in her vigour, they will execute a work truly worthy of themselves ; they will strengthen one pillar of religion and liberty that is in danger of decay, and help to prolong the period of light and happiness to mankind.

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BUT,

But, my Reverend FATHERS and BRETHREN, tho' this defect in our constitution is a subject of anxiety and regret, and of uneasy forebodings, we need not yet fall into despair. There are some considerations that serve, for the present, to extenuate this evil, and from which we may derive a temporary comfort,

MAY we not hope for a partial, at least, and gradual redress of this evil, from the wisdom and attention of our own Supreme Court of Law, so far as our situation is intrusted to their care? Have not many ministers of this CHURCH already experienced, what just sentiments that learned and venerable body entertain of the narrow allowance made for them, when compared with the flourishing state of this country? Though the provision for the clergy has fallen very much in its value: yet is not their rank, in some respect, raised; not only by the removal of certain political prejudices, which separated them from many of superior order; but also by the rise of all orders of men beneath them, through the improvements of industry, and the increase of wealth? What advantage
may

may not be gained, from the clergy's having become the chief depositaries of general learning, now that the attention and efforts of almost all other men are devoted to commerce alone? Do not our universities borrow many of their fairest ornaments from the CHURCH? And what glory may not be won in that field of distinction so lately opened to the learned of this country, I mean, composition, and the art of writing; where the whole range of science is before them, where there are laurels enough to satisfy the most ardent ambition of literary fame? It is here, ye rising hopes of our JERUSALEM! my younger friends, who are still candidates for the ministry, who have forsaken all to follow this ungainful profession; it is here that you must look for your rewards in this world. Here you will find objects suited to your tastes; here you will perceive a shining path to reputation, that will answer the desire of your hearts: For admiration is the passion of young and generous minds; and the love of distinction is predominant with the youth of genius, far above the love of wealth. It were indeed happy, if, by our

regulations and our own conduct, we could make it a mark of distinction to be admitted of our order.

IT might now be expected that I should address myself to the rest of my audience, and offer some apology to them for having made, what they may think, an encomium on my own order; an encomium to which they may alledge they are bound to pay but little regard. All that I shall say is, that an unjust panegyric is the severest satire. But if the view I have given of the constitution of this CHURCH be true, I have not improperly followed the Psalmist's advice, to *walk about Zion, to tell her towers, to mark well her bulwarks, and consider her palaces, that ye may tell it to the generation following*; that you may impress on your own minds a sense of the excellent church-government you are under, and may inculcate on your children and posterity a just esteem of those who have the charge of your souls, who *have not dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy,*

LET us then join together in fervent prayer
to

to the KING and HEAD of his CHURCH, who hath not only *fenced her with towers and with bulwarks, and adorned her with palaces, but hath made her all glorious within*, that he would bleſs all his own divine inſtitutions, to the ſalvation of men, and the glory of his kingdom; and that whatever he hath left us to deviſe for the ſake of peace and good order, may, through him who alone inſpireth with wiſdom, conduce to the ſame great ends; that *our Jeruſalem may always have proſperity, and that the gates of hell may never prevail againſt her.* AMEN.

F I N I S.

to the KING and LORD of his court,
 who hath not only feared the wrath of
 and with but also the wrath of
 justice, but hath made his all glorious
 in that he would give all his own living
 for the redemption of man, and the
 glory of his kingdom: and that without
 death left me to receive for the first of
 and good order, say, through this who
 living together with us, come to the
 into great ends: that our hearts may be
 more than perfect, and that the power of
 be made more perfect, and that the power of



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